



## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Agency Directors

FROM: Marcia Adams, Executive Director

SUBJECT: 2019 Novel Coronavirus

DATE: March 14, 2020

On Friday, March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency due to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Governor Henry McMaster also declared a state of emergency for the State of South Carolina.

To help slow the spread of COVID-19 in our state and protect the health and safety of South Carolina's citizens, Governor McMaster directs South Carolina agencies and higher education institutions (collectively "agencies") effective Monday, March 16, 2020, to engage in additional proactive measures to help safeguard the health and safety of their workplaces by maximizing telecommuting flexibilities to eligible workers within populations that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified as being at higher risk for serious complications from COVID-19 and CDC-identified special populations.

CDC and DHEC identified high risk and special populations include the following individuals:

- Older adults;
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease;
- People with compromised immune systems; and
- Pregnant women

Agencies should not require certification by a medical professional that an individual is within the CDC and DHEC higher risk or special populations and may accept self-identification by employees that they are in one of these populations. This self-identification may be made verbally or be required in writing.

Agencies should also extend telecommuting flexibilities more broadly to accommodate state and local responses to COVID-19, including, but not limited to, extending telework flexibilities for employees affected by school closures. Agencies are also encouraged to authorize use of sick and/or annual leave for

Ph: 803.734.8120

Fx: 803.734.9002

www.admin.sc.gov







employees who are in CDC higher risk or special populations and are not telework eligible.

Even if employees are in CDC higher risk or special populations, state employees who are designated as essential, or mission-critical to the state's response to COVID-19, or are necessary to the continuity of operations of state government, may be directed to report to work as needed within the sole discretion of the Agency Head or his/her designee.

Agencies with questions regarding telecommuting should consult DSHR's guidance on it (https://www.admin.sc.gov/dshr/model policies).

In response to the evolving situation concerning COVID-19, the Governor has also directed agencies to postpone all non-essential travel, as defined by the Agency Head or his/her designee, until further notice.

The Department of Administration will continue to closely monitor developments related to COVID-19 and provide additional guidance as needed. If you have questions regarding telecommuting or travel, please contact Karen Wingo, Director of the Division of State Human Resources (803-422-8645) or me.

Ph: 803.734.8120

Fx: 803.734.9002

www.admin.sc.gov

